

From: Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival

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This year's Festival Artist is –

Brigitte Clough

For Immediate Release

Lodi's 15th Sandhill Crane Festival – “The Cranes Are Back!” November 4-6, 2011.

“It's time to register for tours on-line at www.cranefestival.com”

Forty-seven tours over three days to choose from, yet waiting till the last minute to register will not make you a happy birder! It's time to register for tours NOW because they fill quickly.

This year's tours kick-off with 4 Friday afternoon Sandhill Crane fly-ins, including one to Staten Island, all made enjoyable and easy, as busses transport you from Hutchins St. Square in Lodi, and back again in time for the evening Art and Wine Reception at the Square from 6:00-8:30 PM.

Throughout Saturday and Sunday, a diverse selection of tours includes an eco-tour to a Lodi winery nestled along the Mokelumne River, a dawn photo tour with a professional photographer, a tour by boat to see bald eagles, a morning kayaking tour on the river, or a leisurely patio boat trip to the delta, are among many more. Tours are modestly priced and most include round trip transportation. All ages are welcome.

Sandhill Cranes from as far away as Siberia and Alaska have been returning to California's Delta in the Central Valley to over winter. Hatched out earlier this summer, the young Sandhill Cranes chicks, or colts, have made their maiden voyage alongside their parents, returning to the Delta wetlands that their ancestors have known for over two million years.

Inspired by the birds' return, the family-friendly **Sandhill Crane Festival**, celebrating its 15th year, will take place in Lodi at Hutchins Street Square, 125 S. Hutchins St, Friday through Sunday, November, 4-6, 2011. Free activities include the Friday evening reception, wine tasting and Art Show. Admission to the Festival is free.

Richard Beilfuss will be the Featured Speaker on Saturday, November 5, at 12:30 PM. Admission to his presentation, “The Global Status and Conservation of Cranes and the Landscapes on Which They Depend”, is free. Hank Lentfer will be the Featured Speaker on Sunday, November 6, at 12:30 PM. Admission to his presentation “Faith of Cranes: Finding Hope and Family in Alaska” is also free.

Other Saturday and Sunday events include programs such as Wild Things, who return with their very special live animals; a bat presentation; an Owl Pellet Exploration workshop; a Decoy Carving Seminar for Beginners; a Crane Dance Workshop for ages 5 to adult, among many others. The Exhibit Hall, which features 30 vendors, a food court, and the hands-on Crane-ium for kids, is also free.

Visit www.cranefestival.com for more information regarding complete festival program, directions, local hotels and general information, or to register for tours.

The Festival attracts well over 1500 visitors to Lodi from throughout California, and beyond. Close to 90% of Sandhill Crane Festival attendees come from outside San Joaquin County to see the cranes, enjoy Festival activities and experience Lodi and the surrounding area.

Information Summary:

Who: Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival

What: Time to Register for Tours

When: Festival date is Nov. 4-6, 2011

Where: Hutchins St. Square, 125 S. Hutchins St., Lodi 95240

Why: Develop an appreciation and understanding of the Sandhill Crane which over winters in the Central Valley wetlands.

How: Register now for one of the many tours or to learn more details, go to: www.cranefestival.com, or call 800-581-6150.

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